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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

25 July 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable David K. E. Bruce,  
Under Secretary of State  
The Honorable William C. Foster,  
Deputy Secretary of Defense  
General Walter Bedell Smith,  
Director of Central Intelligence  
Brigadier General Jesmond D. Balmer, USA,  
Chief, Joint Subsidiary Plans Division

SUBJECT: Staff Study - Preliminary Analysis of the Communist BW  
Propaganda Campaign with Recommendations.

The attached revised staff study on the current Soviet germ warfare campaign (PSB D-25a) is submitted for information and for approval of the recommendations (Paragraphs 19 through 24).

As indicated in the paragraphs referred to above, it is the view of the PSB staff that the current Soviet BW propaganda campaign, and similar campaigns which may be launched in the future, are of sufficient strategic significance to justify close and continuous attention on the part of PSB. At the same time it is recognized that the PSB staff itself is not competent either to advise the Board on the day-to-day operational aspects of the problem or to act as a watch committee with respect to new developments in regard to the Soviet campaign and its implications. It is therefore felt that the proposals contained in Paragraphs 19 and 24 which have been suggested by the Department of State best meet the requirements of the problem from an administrative point of view.

As the aim of the present study was merely to identify the problem and to suggest machinery for dealing with it, no attempt has been made at a definitive analysis of the subject. Since the completion of this study new intelligence has been received indicating that the conclusions could have been strengthened, particularly along the following lines:

1. The Soviet hate-America campaigns are increasingly focussed upon inciting hatred of the U.S. armed forces. Apart from the possible light this throws on Soviet intentions or expectations in the present world situation, it is particularly prejudicial to the U.S. national interest, as compared with less specific types of anti-American propaganda.

2. The campaigns are conducted with as much intensity inside the USSR as in satellite or non-communist countries, and the Soviet government has officially identified itself with even the more extravagant anti-American propaganda to a marked degree. This fact may be a further clue to Soviet intentions, but perhaps its chief significance is that the Soviet government cannot effectively disavow the campaign or equate it with any privately sponsored anti-communist campaigns in the Western press.

3. By their very nature the Soviet charges might acquire a kind of retrospective credibility if circumstances ever made it necessary for us to use chemical warfare, BW, RW, etc. Even the more banal charges of

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mistreatment of prisoners acquire an appearance of veracity in the eyes of many people when accidents or isolated acts of brutality occur as they are statistically certain to occur when large numbers of prisoners are being handled.

4. Regardless of the quantitative intensity of the Soviet campaign, the substance of the Soviet charges against the United States armed forces gives the present campaign a character that is almost without precedent in time of peace. To the degree that the charges of U.S. atrocities gain credence they risk poisoning the minds of future generations as well as of the present one. Propaganda of this type is itself a horror-weapon. It is an attack not only against the United States, but against the very structure of human civilization.

For all the reasons indicated above, and particularly because of the last one, it is my considered view that we should treat the Soviet hate-America campaigns in their current form as a special problem requiring unusually thoughtful and intensive efforts not merely to counteract the effects of the propaganda but to indict the rulers of the USSR before the bar of world opinion for one of the most serious crimes against humanity they have yet committed. Surely, this is an opportunity which should not be missed to array on our side the moral and cultural leaders of the whole world, including the very ones who have sometimes been most easily duped by communist peace-propaganda. This is our chance to shoot down, once and for all, the Stockholm dove. It is also an unusually good occasion to seek from friendly nations and from international organizations more adequate recognition than the U.S. has yet been given for its disinterested efforts to utilize our technological resources for the relief of human want and suffering throughout the world.

In presenting the study to the Board I should like to acknowledge the valuable assistance given the staff in preparing it by Colonel Kenneth K. Hansen of the Office, Chief of Psychological Warfare, Department of the Army.

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Acting Director /

Enclosure

Copy No. 45  
PSB D-25a  
dated 24 July 1952

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COMMENT

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This paper comes up for formal approval at 7 Aug. meeting of PSB, but we can submit comments and suggestions prior to that time if we so desire. Would you pls review the paper and determine its adequacy.

P. Breitweiser

*PEB*  
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28 July 1952

*approved*  
*PEB*

*has no*

*comments*  
*PEB*